

Bram

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
BRIEF DISCOURSE

Concerning the

Notes of the Church.

In Answer to a Late PAMPHLET,
ENTITLED,

The Use and Great Moment of the Notes of the
Church, as delivered by Cardinal BELLARMIN,
De Notis Ecclesiae, Justified. By D^r Sherlock.

I M P R I M A T U R,

*Aug. 11.
1687.*

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A VINDICATION of the Brief Discourse concerning the Notes of the Church.

When we are almost tired with grave and serious Disputes, it is very comfortable to meet with a pleasant and diverting Adversary, who serves instead of a *Prævaricator*, or *Terra Filius*, to refresh and recruit our Spirits with a Scene of Mirth. And though this *Justifier* of *Bellarmin's* Notes looks very demurely, and argues very Logically, and seems to be in very good Earnest, yet a *Merry Andrew* will be a *Merry Andrew* still, though he be drest up in the Habit of a Philosopher; and therefore I must beg my Readers Pardon, if I cannot forbear Smiling sometimes, though to pay due respect to my Adversary, and to maintain a just Decorum, I will do it very gravely too.

He begins very movingly. *The World is come to a fine pass, when it shall as good as deny Christ's One great Moment Holy Catholick Church.* This is very wicked indeed! The Use and of Notes, p. 1.

But who are these Miscreants, that dare do such a Thing? A Company of Senseless Wretches, who deny Christ's Church, and yet confess, *that there is no remission of Sins, or Eternal Salvation out of it.* Then I suppose, they are Men, who don't care much for Salvation, nor Sence: for to deny a Church, out of

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which they confess there is no Salvation, is to resolve to be damned; and to say, that Salvation is not to be had out of the Church, and yet that Christ has no such Church, deserves Damnation, as much as Nonsense does. And therefore I suppose by *as good* he does not mean, that they altogether deny it, but do something *as good*, or rather as bad as that; but what this should be, I cannot guess, unless it be to deny the *Roman-Catholick Church* to be this *One Holy Catholick Church* of Christ, and that indeed is a very sad thing too. And they seek to baffle those, who by Prayer and Guidance of God's good Spirit, search to find it out, i. e. they confute Bellarmin's Notes of a Church, and that must be confessed to be a very sad thing also, and as good as denying Christ's One Holy Catholick Church.

Well! Cardinal Bellarmin (after others) hath to very good purpose lent his helping Hand, to shew us the City built on a Hill. But it had been better he had lent us his Eyes; for Protestants see with their Eyes, and not with their Hands; and notwithstanding his pointing to it, we cannot see what he would shew us, unless it be the Church built on Seven Hills.

Pag. 2.

But this is all to little purpose with the Obstinate, who will not agree, neither what the Church is, nor what a Note may be. This is unpardonable Obstinacy, that we desire the Cardinal or any one for him, first to tell us, what a true Church is, before he tells us, which is the true Church, to explain the Nature before he gives us the External Notes and Marks of a Church, which is as unreasonable as to ask, what a *Hind*, and a *Panther* is, before we ask, of what Colour they are, whether White or Spotted: and

and who would think any one should be so perverse, as to ask what a Note is, which our Author will give us a learned Definition of presently.

The Discourser had said, pag. 3. That a Church is a Society of Christians united under Christian Pastors for the Worship of Christ, and wherever we find such a Society as this, there is a Christian Church, and all such particular or national Churches all the World over, make up the whole Christian Church, or the Universal Church of Christ. That is (says the Justifier, pag. 2.) whatsoever therefore is the Denomination of Believers, Abassine or Armenian, Greek, Roman, let us add, Lutheran, Calvinist, with a wide, &c. they are each of them Churches of Christ (suppose this, of which more presently, and if we allow the Roman, they may modestly allow all the rest) and the Church Universal is nothing else but the Aggregate, or *omnium gatherum* (very elegantly!) of all such Professions. And what then? The Church Universal is made up of all particular Churches. What then do you say? Why pray, consider, whoever thou art, good Reader, the Church Catholick consisting of all Nations, Jew and Gentile, and therefore primarily called Catholick, (and therefore not from their Union to the Bishop of Rome, as the Head of Catholick Unity) had its Plantation by our blessed Lord and his Apostles, in one Faith, and one Communion, antedecently to all such Divisions that now or then were made by the Craft and Policy of Satan. A notable Observation this! That the Faith and Communion of the Church was one, before it was divided: What then? And therefore far is the Universal Church from being an Aggregate of all such Breaches of Faith and Charity. An Aggregate of Breaches, an Union of Divisions may possibly be as good a Church

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as it is sense. But though *Breaches* cannot very well be *aggregated*, it is possible that two divided Churches may both belong to the one Body of Christ, as quarrelling Brethren may still be the Children of the same Father, and owned by him too, though corrected and punished for their Quarrels. Churches consist of Men, who are liable to Mistakes and Passions, and therefore may quarrel and separate from each other, while they are both united to Christ in Faith and Worship. For though the Bishops, and Pastors, and Members, of distinct and coordinate Churches ought to maintain a Brotherly Correspondence, and exercise all Acts of Communion, that distant Churches are capable of with each other; upon account of that common Relation they all have to Christ, in whom they are united into one Body; and our common Head will exact a severe Account of those who cause Divisions; yet if such Divisions happen, as separate us from each other, but do not divide us from Christ, each Church may continue a true Church still, and belong to the one Mystical Body of Christ, though there may be some scandalous Breaches and Divisions among them. What is it then that unites any Church to Christ but the true Faith and Worship of Christ? And if contending Churches may both retain the true Christian Faith and Worship, at least in such a degree, as not to be unchurched, the external Peace of the Church is broken, which is a very great Crime, and will fall heavy upon the Authors of it, yet if they both belong to Christ, this *Aggregate of Breaches*, and *omnium gatherum of Professions*, as our Author very wittily speaks, may be united in Christ's Mystical Body. For though they sling one another out of the Church, our common

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Saviour may chastise their Follies, but own them both, as in such a divided State of Christendom, we have great reason to hope he will.

But let us hear what our Author says is the Catholick Church. *'Tis only a Comprehension of all those Churches which keep to the Unity of the Faith, and persist in their first undivided Estate in the Bond of Universal Peace.* By the *Unity of the Faith*, I hope he means, that one Faith, in which, as he tells us, Christ and his Apostles planted the Church; and then I doubt this will fall hard upon the Church of Rome, which rejects all other Churches, who do retain this One Apostolick Faith, if they disown the new Articles of the *Trent Creed*: and the *first undivided Estate* of the Church was settled in an Equality and Brotherly Association of Bishops and Churches, not in the Empire of one over all the rest, and then this is more severe upon the Church of Rome, than Protestants desire; for she has destroyed this first undivided State by challenging such a Supremacy, as enslaves all other Churches to her, and therefore is so far from being the One Catholick Church, that if this Definition be true, she is no part of it. And as for *the Bond of Universal Peace*, what Claim she can lay to that, let the cruel Persecutions of those innocent Christians, whom she calls Hereticks, the Excommunication of whole Churches, the deposing of Princes, and all the Blood, that has been shed in Christendom under the Banners of Holy Church, witness for her.

And thus we come to the *Notion of a Note or Mark*, which he says is clear by its Definition, page 3. and therefore I hope he will give us such a Definition, as is self-evident, or which all Mankind agree in;
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for a Definition, which the contending Parties do not agree in, can clear nothing. Let us then hear his Definition: *That it is a most sensible Appearance in or about the Subject enquired after, whereby we are led toward the Knowledge of the present Existence or Essence of the said Subject.* And from hence he concludes; *'Tis manifest then, that a Note of a Thing must be extra-essential of it self, because by it, and the Light from thence, we arrive to the Knowledge of the Essence.* And he adds, *upon which Grounds you see the reasonable Demands of those, who challenge, first, That a distinctive Mark or Note must be more known than the Thing notified. Secondly, That a Note must be in Conjunction at least, in some measure proper, not common or indifferent to many singulars, much less to contraries.*

Now all that I can pick out of this, is, 1. That the Existence or Essence of things must be known by Notes. 2. That such Notes whereby we discover the Existence or Essence of things must be *extra-essential*, or not belong to the Essence of it. And yet, 3. That these Notes must not be common, but proper to the thing, of which it is a Note. Which are as pretty Notions as a Man shall ordinarily meet with, and therefore I shall briefly examine them.

First, That the Existence or Essence of things must be known by Notes. For if the Existence and Essence of things may be known without Notes, this Dispute about Notes is to no purpose. And yet how many things are there, whose Existence and Essence are known without Notes? Who desires any Note to know the Sun by? to know what Light, or Taste, or Sounds, Pain, or Pleasure is? The Presence of these

these Objects, and the notice our Senses give us of them, that is, the things themselves are the only Notes of themselves. The use of Signs or Notes, is only to discover the Existence of such things, as are absent, visible, or future; but what is present and visible, exposed to the notice of Sense or Reason, is best known by it self, and can be rightly known no other way: and therefore since all the dispute is about Marks of the Church, he ought to prove, that the Church is such a Society as can be known only by Notes, and then it must either be absent, invisible, or future; for all other things may be known by themselves without Notes.

Secondly, Especially since he will allow nothing to be a Note but what is extra-essential, or does not belong to the essence of the thing; which seems to me a very extraordinary way of finding out the Existence or Essence of things by such Notes as do not belong to their Essence; and then I think they cannot prove their Existence. For how can I find out any thing, without knowing in some measure what it is I find? or, how can I know what the Essence of any thing is by such Notes as are not essential? There are but two sorts of Notes, or Signs, that I know of, natural, or instituted; and they both suppose that we know the thing, and the Note and Sign of it, before we can find it out by Signs or Notes. As for Natural Signs, the most certain Signs we have are Causes and Effects, but we must know both the Causes and Effects, before the one can be a Sign of the other. Thus Smoke is a Sign of Fire, but it is no Sign of Fire to any Man, who does not know what

Fire is, and that it will cause a Smoak, when it seizes on combustible Matter, and that nothing else can cause a Smoak but Fire. Thus in univocal Effects, the Effect declares the Nature of the Cause; as we know, that a Man had a Man to his Father, but then we must first know what a Man is, and that a Man begets in his own Likeness. But this I suppose is not our Author's meaning, that the Notes of the Church are Natural Causes and Effects, or Natural Concomitants or Adjuncts, because the Church is not a Natural, but a Mystical Body, and therefore can have no Natural Notes.

Let us then consider instituted Signs, and they we grant must be extra-essential; but then there never was, and never can be an instituted Sign to discover the Essence and Existence of what we did not know before: The Use of such Signs is to distinguish Places or Persons, by different Names, or Habits, or Colours, &c. or to serve instead of Words, as the Sound of the Trumpet, or the Beat of the Drum, or to be for Legal Contracts and Securities, and the like; but instituted Signs are no Signs till we know the thing of which they are Signs; which shews how ridiculous it is to talk of such extra-essential Notes, as shall discover the Existence and Essence of things, which we knew not before; for if we must first know the Church, before we can find it out by Notes, these extra-essential Notes may be spared. To be sure this shews how far this Definition of a Note is from being clear, since it does not suit any kind of Notes which Mankind are acquainted with; and if the Notes of the Church are a peculiar sort of Notes by themselves, he should

not have appealed to the common Notion and Definition of Signs and Notes, because there are no other Notes like them.

Thirdly, He adds, that these Notes must not be common to other things, but proper to the thing of which it is a Note. Now I desire him to shew any such extra-essential Notes in Nature, which are not common to other things; for what in Logick we call *Propria*, do immediately result from the Nature of things, and therefore are not extra-essential Notes, nay are no Notes at all to find out the Essence or Existence of things by, for we must first know what the Nature and Essence of things is, before we can know their essential Properties; and as for inseparable Accidents, how inseparable soever they are from such a thing, yet they may be common to other things, and then by his own Rule cannot be Notes.

But this is not the Case, as I observed before, for the Church is not a Natural, but a Mystical Body, and therefore its Nature depends upon its Institution; and though in Natural Beings we may distinguish between the Essence and the essential Properties, yet where Institution alone is Nature, whatever is made proper, necessary, and inseparable by Institution, is of the Nature of it; and there is no Distinction that I know of between the Essence and essential Properties. In natural Beings we call that the Nature, and Form, and Essence of the thing, by which every thing is what it is, and without which it would cease to be that kind of Being, which now it is, as Rationality is of the Essence

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of a Man, for Man is a reasonable Creature, and without a Principle of Reason he cannot be a Man. Now in allusion to Natural Beings, we apply the same Terms to matters of Institution, and call that the Nature and Essence of a Church, without which according to the Laws of its Institution it would not be a Church. And therefore whatever by Institution is so proper, peculiar to, and inseparable from a Church, that without it, it cannot be a Church, is of the Nature and Essence of the Church, and not an extra-essential Property, which indeed is Non-sence. The observing this one distinction between Nature and Institution, will confound this whole Doctrine of the Notes of the Church. For,

1. There can be no Notes of an Institution but the Institution it self: Notes must signify either by Nature or Institution: There can be no Natural Notes of an Institution, which is not the Effect of Nature, but of the Divine Will; and therefore if there be any, they must be instituted Notes, that is, the Institution of the Church must be the Mark or Note, whereby to know it; unless we will say, that there must be a second Institution to be the Notes of the first, and by the same Reason there must be a third to be the Notes of the second, and there will be no place to stop at, unless we stop at the first Institution, which needs no other Notes to prove it self by.

2. That in matters of Institution there is no distinction between Nature and Properties. In natural Beings indeed there is a Distinction between the Nature

ture and Properties of things, because there are some Properties, which by a natural Causality spring from Nature, as Visibility from Rationality. But now in Matters of Institution one part of the Institution is not the natural Cause of the other, but the whole Institution and every part of it immediately depends upon the Will and Pleasure of God : and therefore there can be no extra-essential Properties of a Church, but whatever is proper and inseparable by a Divine Institution, is the Essence of the Church ; for it has no other Nature and Essence but its Institution.

3. Hence it evidently follows, that there can be no extra-essential Notes of a Church ; that nothing can be a Note of a Church, but what is essential to it by Institution ; for whatever Institution makes proper and necessary, it makes essential. I confess, this is a very improper way of speaking, to call the Nature and Essence of any thing the Note of it ; for a Note or Sign ought to be different and distinct from the thing shown or signified by it ; and thus we ought roundly to deny, that there are any Notes of a Church, or that the Church can be found out by Notes ; but the Protestants in compliance with the Popish way of speaking, called that the Notes of the Church, which is not properly Notes and Signs, but the Rule and Standard of the Church, by which all Societies of Men, which pretend to be Christian Churches, are to be tried. And it is certain there can be no other Rule or Standard of the Church, but its Institution, as to Faith, and Worship, and Government. Common sense will tell us that there is no way to try an instituted Society, but by the
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Rules of its Institution : That Church which conforms to the original Rule and Standard of its Institution, is a true Church, and every Church is more or less corrupt, as it varies from it : And here we ought to fix the Controversy, that the Church is not to be found out by Notes, but to be tried by the Rule of its Institution ; and then farewell to Cardinal Bellarmine's Notes, which, I believe, he himself, though a Jesuit, would not have had Confidence to say, that they belonged to the Institution of a Church.

In the next Place he says, *I have reckoned up the Cardinal's Notes, now here, now there, piece-meal, but durst not let them pass by in their Majestick Train, lest the Reader with Saba's Queen should be dazzl'd at the Glory, transported as she was, that there was no Life in her.* If Rhetorick would do the Business, we were certainly undone, and should have no more Life left than the Queen of Sheba : But the truth is, the Cardinal's Notes may possibly lose something of their Majesty, when they are shewn by Hereticks, and there is no help for that : but as for their Train, to supply the Defects of the Discourser, they have been since shewn in very good Order, and we live still : But whether they be *Triumphant Notes* still of the *Church-militant*, as he calls them, is somewhat doubtful ; and indeed it seems somewhat unreasonable that the Notes should be triumphant, while the Church is militant ; tho' triumph it seems they do over some slavish and servile Minds ; but their Triumph would be very short, were not the Church so *militant* as it is.

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But as if there were some Charm in this *Majestick Train*, nothing will serve him, but to reckon them up in their Order; and I must confess, he has given such a new Grace and Majesty to them, that I believe *Bellarmin* himself could not know them again.

1st. *The Name Catholick* how sacred to all those, who own any of the Three Creeds, really and veritably! O, how sacred indeed! for Hereticks themselves own and challenge the Name.

2^{dly}. *Its Antiquity*, how indubitable, and above all suspicion of Novelty. Yes, yes! Antiquity is not Novelty, but a pretence to Antiquity may: for how old is the Council of *Trent*? which is the true Antiquity of many Popish Articles of Faith.

3^{dly}. *Perpetual Duration*, out-lasting all earthly Empires and Kingdoms. For it plucks them down as fast as it can.

4^{thly}. *Amplitude*; being a great Body according to Prophecy. But not so big as Paganism yet.

5^{thly}. *Succession Apostolical*, the very Jews confessing it; as they do Transubstantiation. How strong, invincible, clear, and undeniable by Gainsayers! Then I suppose it has no Gain-sayers, if they do not deny it.

6^{thly}. *Primitive consent*, how great and how manifest to those good Men, who enquire! Yea, how great indeed! for no Body can find it but the Vicar of *Putney*. Witness the Multitudes that return to the Catholick Church upon that account. Monsieur de *Meaux*'s French Converts, I suppose, who never heard of the Dragoons.

7^{thly}. *Intimate Union with their Head Christ*, and with one another: But *Bellarmin*'s visible Head of Unity is the Pope, not Christ; so that this is a new Note, and it seems the Churches Union with Christ

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Christ is extra-essential also, or else it could be no Note.

8thly. *Sanctity of Doctrine, as revealed by God, in whom is Light, and no Darkness at all.* In teaching Men to break Faith with Hereticks; to depose Heretical Princes, and absolve their Subjects from their Oaths of Allegiance, and arm them against their Leige Lord; to prefer the Cælibacy of Priests (tho the manifest Cause of so many Adulteries and Fornications) as a more Holy State than Matrimony; and such like Doctrines, wherein is Darkness, but no Light at all.

9thly. *Efficacy upon Infidels.* Witness the *Spanish Conversions* in the *Golden Indies*. But why not upon Hereticks as well as Infidels? I fear the *Conversions* in *England* are so slow, that he dares not yet make that a Mark of the Church.

10thly. *The Holiness of the Fathers.* *Whose Lives we wish to be Legends, (though unquestionably true) when we see, how far they have out-done us.* Ay! that makes Hereticks call them Legends.

11thly. *The Glory of Miracles, which a Man would be wary of contradicting for fear of Blasphemy and sinning against the Holy Ghost:* Especially when they are such Miracles as no Body ever saw, but the Monk who relates them; or Miracles to prove both parts of a Contradiction to be true; as for Instance, that the *Virgin Mary*, was, and was not conceived in Original Sin. But if ever they had suffered poor *Jetzer's Fate*, they would rather hereafter believe, than feel such Miracles. *Still continued, and denied by none but Scepticks, in dis-possession of Devils:* I suppose, he means the Boy of *Bil-son*, and curing the *Struma*, the Kings-Evil, but this is a Protestant, as well as Popish Miracle, and is a better proof,

proof, that the King, than that the Pope, is the Head of the Church.

12. *The Gift of Prophecy.* Witness the Maid of Kent. To say nothing concerning the Confession of Adversaries, and unhappy Exit of the Churches Enemies. Which may very well be spared; for there have been Confessions, and unhappy Exits on both sides. Tho Hen. 8. Queen Elizabeth, and King James 1. were no Examples of such unhappy Exits. These, These are the Notes, which (like a Bill in Parliament) deserve a second Reading, and then to be thrown out, though I hope they will never come in there.

The way being thus prepared, the Court sat, and the Jury of Notes empannell'd, which I suppose is the reason why he calls but 12 of Bellarmin's 15, the rest being Supernumeraries, the Discourser is summoned to make his Appearance. Enter Discourser. Which, I can assure you, put him into a fright on the sudden, fearing it might be the Inquisition; but he recollected himself, and thus began his Plea.

pag. 5.

Is not the Catholick Church visible? And if we can see, which is the Church, what need we guess at it by Marks and Signs? (and that by such Marks and Signs too, as are matter of dispute themselves? cannot we distinguish between the Christian Church, and a Turkish Mosque, and a Jewish Synagogue?) cannot we without all this ado distinguish a Christian from a Turk, or a Jew, or a Pagan? And it will be as easy to find out a Christian Church, as it will be to find out Christians. And what now is the hurt of this? Oh! says the Justifier, What Spirit is that which envies the Christian the Felicity of finding the true Church, and casts an evil Eye upon the Notes conducing to it, let any Christian judg? A very Evil Spirit doubtless! But does the Dis-

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courser do this? Who says, that the Church is visible; and may be known without disputable Notes? for Notes are only to discover things absent and invisible, but what is visible is best known by it self. *Yes, for whereas he pretends 'tis visible (besides that he flatly denies it after, p. 14.) Nay say I, not among Counterfeits; Is it visible at Sea, which is the Royal Navy, when the Enemy puts up the English Colours?*

First, then, let us reconcile the Discourser with himself. He asks, whether the Church be not visible? and therein appeals to the Confession of his Adversaries, that the Church is visible, and wonders, what need there is of Notes, of disputable Notes, to find out a visible Church, in *Pag. 14.* He desires to know, *How they will prove, that there is a Church without the Scripture.* He answers for them, that *the Church is visible, for we see a Christian Church in the World;* but says he, *What is it I see? I see a Company of Men, who call themselves a Church, and this is all, that I can see, and is this seeing a Church? A Church must have a divine Original and Institution, and therefore there is no seeing a Church without seeing its Charter,* and is this to deny the Visibility of the Church, because it cannot be seen or known without its Charter, when it Charter is as visible as the Society, which calls its self the Church? And surely that Church is visible enough, whose Society and Charter are both visible, tho the Church cannot be known without its Charter.

But now the Answerer will not allow the Church to be visible *among Counterfeits*, and then it has not been visible this hundred Years at least; and then what becomes of *Bellarmin's* Notes, which are none, if the

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Church be not visible, for they are Notes not of an invisible, but of a visible Church. But the Comparison whereby he proves this, is an eternal Confutation of such extra-essential Notes. *Is it visible at Sea which is the Royal Navy, when the Enemy puts up the English Colours?* Which shows how fallible Notes are; for Colours are Notes of the Royal Navy, and these may deceive us; but if you go aboard and see the Ships and the Company and their Commissions, you cannot be mistaken. The Natures of things cannot be counterfeited, but Notes may.

The Discourser says, *A Christian Church is nothing else but a Society of Christians united under Christian Pastors for the Worship of Christ.* This the Justifier thinks a very slight way of speaking, *nothing else But!* and if he does not understand English, I cannot help that. But **CHRISTIAN PASTORS** for a need will take in Presbyters, who renounce Episcopacy, nay Congregational, who renounce Presbytery; It takes in indeed all Christian Pastors be they what they will. Whether Presbyterian and Independent Ministers are Christian Pastors, the Discourser was not concerned to determine; for he did not undertake to tell in particular, which are true Christian Churches, but what is the general Notion of a Christian Church; who are true Pastors, but that the Union of Christians under true Christian Pastors makes a Church: Tho the *Pastores Ecclesie* in the ancient Language signified only Bishops, who had the care of the Flock, and the government of the inferiour Presbyters. Thus the *Worship of Christ*, he says, may signify with Liturgy, or without it, with the Apostles Creed, or without it, &c. And so it may if both with and without be the true Worship of Christ.

What a long Definition must the Discourser have given of a Christian Church, had he been directed by this Author, and stated all the Controversies about Episcopacy and Presbytery, and the several Kinds and Modes of Worship in his Definition; which, when he had done it, had been nothing at all to his purpose.

The Discourser proceeds. *All such particular or National Churches all the World over, make up the whole Christian Church, or Universal Church of Christ. Yes (says the Justifier, pag. 6.) and all such Churches of Christ (if they could meet) would be like the Men in the Market-place, one crying out one thing, and another another, and no Authority could send them home peaceably to their Dwellings.* I confess, I am of another Mind, that could all the Churches in the World meet, how much soever they differ at a distance, they would agree better before they parted; and this I think, all those should believe; who have any Reverence for General Councils, which certainly such a Meeting as this would be in a proper sense.

Well! But there is *Schism lies in the Word National Church.* How so, good Sir? *as if Nations here were at their own disposal.* And pray, why may not all the Churches in a Nation unite into one National Communion; And how is this a Schism, if they maintain Brotherly Communion with other Christian Churches? Or *as if Christ begged leave of the Potentates of the Earth to plant his Truth among them.* Why so? Cannot there be a National Church without Christ's begging leave of Potentates to plant his Gospel among them? Suppose there be Churches planted

ted in a Nation without the leave of the Potentates, may not all these Churches unite into a National Communion without the leave of Potentates too? And is not such a National Union of Churches a National Church? Suppose Princes voluntarily submit their Scepters to Christ, and encourage and protect the Christian Churches in their Dominions, and unite them all into one National Church; is there any need of Christ's asking leave of such Potentates, who willingly devote themselves to his Service? But he says, *the greater Mistake is, that these Churches all put together make up the Universal Church of Christ.* But are not all the Churches the Universal Church? What then is the Universal Church but All? Yes, he says, *Universal enough, - I confess, but where is the Unity?* Why, is it impossible that all Churches should be united in one Communion? If it be, then Unity is not necessary, or the Universal Church does not include all Churches: If it be not, then all Churches may be the Universal, the One Catholick Church of Christ. *We (says he) look for Unity, they shew us Multitude and Division.* Is Multitude and Division the same thing? Or is Unity inconsistent with Multitude? How then could the Churches of *Jerusalem*, of *Antioch*, of *Corinth*, of *Ephesus*, of *Rome*, be one Church? *We desire Unity, they shew us Universality:* As if there could not be Unity in Universality? I wish this Author would first learn Grammar and Logick, or, which I fear is harder to teach him, common sense, before he pretends again to dispute in Divinity: but now we have him, we must make the best of him we can.

And

And here the Answerer spends several Pages in proving that the Church must be One, which no body that I know of denies, and which he may find truly stated in answer to Cardinal *Bellarmino's* seventh Note. But what is this to the Discourser, who was not concerned to state this Point? He gives such a Definition of a Church, as belongs to all true particular Churches, as every Man ought to do, who gives the Definition of a Church; for a particular Church has the entire Nature and Essence of a Church; and there can be no true Definition of a Church, but what belongs to a particular Church. He says indeed, that the Universal Church consists of all true particular Churches, and so most certainly it does; No, says the Answerer, all particular Churches are not at Unity, and therefore they cannot be the One Catholick, or Universal Church. But suppose this, is there any other Notion of the Universal Church, but that it is made up of all true particular Churches, which is all that the Discourser asserted, without considering how all particular Churches must be united to make the One Catholick Church, which was nothing to his purpose. In such a divided State of Christendom as this, meer external Unity and Communion cannot be the Mark of a true Church, because all Churches are divided from each other. If we are not at Unity with the Church of *Rome*, no more is the Church of *Rome* at Unity with us; and if meer Unity be the Mark of the true Church, neither part of the Division can pretend to it. And therefore either some Churches may be true Churches, which

which are not at Unity with all others, or there is no true Church in the World. And therefore though Cardinal *Bellarmino* makes Unity the Mark of a true Church, yet not the Unity of all Churches with each other, for he knew, there was no such thing in his Days in the World, and I fear is not likely to be again in haste; but the Unity of Churches to the Bishop of *Rome*, who is the visible Head of the Church: And thus the Catholick Church signifies all those Churches which are united to the Bishop of *Rome*, as the Center of Unity. But this is such an Unity as the Scripture says nothing of, and which Protestants disown, and which this Answerer has not said one word to prove; for this is the Unity of Subjection, not the Unity of Love and Charity, which Christ and his Apostles so vehemently press us to. Now if the Unity of the Catholick Church does not consist in Subjection to a visible Head, and all other external Communion is broken and divided, we must content our selves to know, what it is that makes a particular National Church, a true, sound and pure Church; for whatever Divisions there are in the World, every true Church is part of Christ's one Catholick Church. And whatever Unity there be among other Churches, if they be not true Churches, they are no Parts of Christ's Catholick Church. And this was all the Discourser intended, or was obliged to in pursuit of his Design.

And thus I might pass over what he talks about Church-Unity, but that he has some very peculiar Marks which are worth our notice.

He says, pag. 7. *Protestants save the Unity of the Church, mainly because Christendom is divided and separated*

A Vindication of the Discourse

ted from *Heathenism* (which I wish heartily all Christians perfectly were) *not considering so much the Unity with it self.* But ; ray who told him, that Protestants do not place the Unity of the Church in Unity, but in Separation? All true Christian Churches are united in the most essential things : They have one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, and this makes them *one Body* animated by the same Holy Spirit, which dwells in the whole Christian Church ; *Ephes. 4. 4, 5, 6.* But still they are not one entire Communion, but divide and separate from each other : This we will grant is a very great Fault, but yet if they communicate in such things, as makes one Church, whatever their other Divisions are, they are one Church still ; their Quarrels and Divisions may hurt themselves, but cannot destroy the Unity of the Church ; for the Church is one Body, not merely by the Unity and Agreement of Christians among themselves ; but by the Appointment and Institution of Christ, who has made all those who profess the true Faith, and are united in the same Sacraments, to belong to the same Body, to be his One Body. And therefore Christians are never exhorted to be one Body ; for that they are if they be Christians, as the Apostle expressly asserts, that Christians are but one Body ; but they are exhorted to live in Unity and Concord, because they are but one Body : *I therefore the Prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith you are called, with all Lowliness and Meekness, with Long-suffering, forbearing one another in Love : Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* There

*Ephes. 4. 1, 2,
3.*

is *One Body, and one Spirit*.——Because there is but *one Body and one Spirit*, therefore they must endeavour to preserve the *Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*. Which supposes the Christian Church to be *one Body* by Institution, though the external Peace of the Church be broken by Schisms and Factions; because our Obligation to preserve the Peace of the Church, and the Unity of Ecclesiastical Communion, results from this *Unity of Body*; which makes Schism a very great Evil, and very destructive to Mens Souls, as all other Vices are; but the Church, which has but one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, is but one Church still, though Christians quarrel with each other. Thus St. Paul asserts, that *as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body being many, are one Body; so also is Christ*. But how do all Christians come to be one Body in Christ? That he answers, *for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body——and have been made to drink into one Spirit*. And from hence he shews, what Tenderness all Christians ought to express for each other, as being Members of each other. Pag. 25. *That there should be no Schism in the Body, but that the Members should have the same care one for another*. But suppose Christians have not this mutual care one of another, do they cease to be Members of the same Body? No such matter: these Quarrels between the Members of the same Body are very unnatural, but they are the same Body still. Pag. 15, 16. *If the Foot shall say, because I am not the Hand, I am not of the Body, is it therefore not of the Body? And if the Ear shall say, because*

1 Cor. 12. 12, 13, &c.

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cause I am not the Eye, I am not of the Body, is it therefore not of the Body? That is, though the Members of the same Body out of Discontent, and Envy, and Emulation, should separate from each other, and deny that they belong to the same Body, yet they are of the Body still. For we must consider, that the Schisms in the Church of *Corinth* were occasioned by an Emulation of Spiritual Gifts, and unless every one of them could be an Eye or an Hand, that is, have the most eminent Gifts, they envied and divided from each other, as if they did not belong to the same Body; which the Apostle tells them, was as absurd, as if the Eye and the Hand and the Foot should deny their Relation to the same Natural Body, because they differed in their Use and Honour: however if such a thing were possible in the Natural Body, they would all belong to the same Body still; and so it is in the Christian Church. Which shews, that the whole Christian Church is the one Mystical Body of Christ, united to him by Faith and Baptism, notwithstanding all the Divisions of Christendom.

For let us consider, what the Divisions of Christendom are, and whether they be such, as wholly destroy the Unity of the Body. All the Churches in the World are divided from the Church of *Rome* by disowning the Authority of the Pope, as the visible Head of the Catholic Church; but this does not destroy the Unity of the Body, because the Unity of the Body does not consist in the Union of all Churches to one visible Head, but in their Union to Christ, who is the one Lord of the Church. Some Churches are divided in Faith; not but that they agree in the necessary Articles of the Christian Faith,

Faith, (for to renounce any essential Article of the Christian Faith does so far unchurch) but some Churches believe only what Christ and his Apostles taught, others together with the true Faith of Christ teach Heretical Doctrines, contrary to that form of sound Words once delivered to the Saints. And though this must of necessity divide Communions, for if any Church corrupt the Christian Faith, with new and perverse Doctrines of her own, other Orthodox Christians are not bound to believe as they do; yet both of them are true Christian Churches still; for the true Faith makes a true Church; but only with this difference, that those who profess the true Faith of Christ without any corrupt Mixtures, are Sound and Orthodox Churches; other Churches are more or less pure according to the various Corruptions of their Faith. And thus it is with respect to the Christian Sacraments, and Christian Worship; every Church which observes the Institutions of our Saviour, and worships God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, is a true Church; but those Churches which corrupt this Worship, though they are true, are corrupt Churches; as the Church of *Rome* does in the Worship of Saints and Angels, and the Virgin *Mary*, and the Adoration of the Host, and the Sacrifice of the Mass, &c. And in this case, though what they retain of the Essentials of Christian Worship is sufficient to denominate them true Churches, yet other Churches are not bound to Communicate with them in their Corruptions.

The plain state then of the case is this. All Churches which profess the true Faith and Worship of Christ, though intermixed with great Corruptions, belong to the one Body of Christ; and to know whether any

Church be a true Church, we must not so much enquire, whom they communicate with, or separate from, but what their Faith and Worship is. That external Unity is so far from being the Mark of a true Church, that we may be bound not to communicate with true Churches, which are corrupt; because we are not bound to communicate in a corrupt Faith or Worship: And that in this case the guilt of Separation lies on that side where the Corruptions are. And yet all the Christian Churches in the World, that retain the true Faith and Worship of Christ, though they are divided from each other upon the Disputes of Faith or Worship or Discipline, are yet the One Church of Christ, as being united in the Essentials of Faith and Worship, which by the Institution of Christ makes them his one Mystical Body, and one Church.

Some Lines after he has a very notable Remark about the Unity of the Church. That the Church *admits not, but casts out some, though they profess Christianity, Schismatics, Hereticks; which being cast out, if you mark it well, she is united with her self.* And I assure you, it is worth marking; for if you mark it well, every Conventicle in Christendom is thus united with it self. But is this the Unity of the Catholick Church, to cast all out of our Communion, who are not of our Mind, and then call our selves the Catholick Church, when there are a great many other Churches which profess the Faith of Christ as truly and sincerely as we do, and are as much united among themselves, as we are? Why may not the Church of *England* upon this Principle call her self the Catholick Church? For she has more Unity in this way, than the Church of *Rome* has. When all
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Hereticks and Schismatics are cast out, she is united with her self; and if this Unity be a Mark of the Catholick Church, all the Churches and Conventicles of Christendom are the Catholick Church, for they are all united with themselves. But then the difficulty will be, how all these Churches, which are united with themselves, but separated from one another, make one Catholick Church? or, which of these Churches, which are thus united with themselves (which it seems is Catholick Unity) is the One Church? for every one of them have this Mark of the Catholick Church, that they are united with themselves.

He proves (Pag. 8.) *That Schismatics are not of the Church, one Holy entire Church, from their very Name, which signifies rending and tearing, not the Seamless Coat alone, but the blessed Body of our Lord.* And I must confess, the Name Schismatick is as good a Mark of a Schismatical Church, as the Name Catholick is of the Catholick Church: But we must consider, who are the God-Fathers, and whether they have given proper Names or not. Now the Church of Rome is the common God-Mother, which Christens her self *Catholick*, and all other Churches *Schismatics*, but whether she be infallible in giving Names, ought to be considered.

But Schism signifies *rending and tearing*; and yet a Schismatical Church signifies a Church too, and how they are a Church without belonging to the *One Church*, when there is but *One Church*, is somewhat mysterious. And therefore Schism is not tearing off a part of the Church, but one part dividing from the other in external Communion, which supposes that both parts still belong to the same Church, or else the Church is not divided. For Apostacy and
Schism

Schism are two different things; Apostates cease to be of the Church, Schismatics are of the Church still, though they disturb the Peace of the Church, and divide the external Communion of it; which differ as forsaking the Church, and going out of it (which no Man does, who does not renounce the Faith of Christ) and raising Quarrels and Contentions in it, to the alienating of Christians from each other.

But that Schismatics are not of the Church, he proves from St. Paul's rebuking his siding Corinthians with this quick Interrogatory: *Is Christ saith he (he means his Catholick Church) divided? How! nothing more absurd, than to grant division in the Church.* An excellent Paragraph! does St. Paul, who reproves these Corinthians for their Schisms, shut them out of the Church for them too? does he deny them to belong to the Church, when he directs his Epistle to the Church of God at Corinth? Is it so very absurd, to grant that there are Divisions in the Church, when St. Paul rebukes them for their Divisions, which surely supposes that they were divided? And is it absurd to suppose that to be, which at the same time we confess to be? To say that Christ is divided, or that there are more Christs than one, would be very absurd indeed; to say, that the Church of Christ is divided, is no Absurdity, because it is true; but the Absurdity or Unreasonableness, and Indecency, which St. Paul charges them with, is the Absurdity in Practice, that when there is but one Christ, one Lord, whom they all worship, that the Disciples of the same Lord should divide from each other, as if they served and worshipped different Masters.

But he has a very choice Note about the Unity of the Church, (Pag. 9.) *That it is the Unity of a Body, a living*

living animate Body; but not I hope of a Natural, but a Mystical Body, animated by that Divine Spirit which dwells in the whole, and in every part of it, and therefore nothing can cut us off from the Unity of this Body, but that which divides us totally from the quickning and animating Influences of this Spirit, which it is certain all external Divisions do not. Well! but it is not the Unity of a *Mathematical Body which is divisibile in semper divisibilia, but animate*. This I believe every Body will grant him, that the Church is not a Mathematical Body; but what hurt is there in Mathematical Unity? Oh! that is divisibile without end, and that I confess is an ill kind of Unity: But I hope it is one, till it be divided, and I fear a living animate Body is divisibile too; and if that cannot be one, which is divisibile, I fear there is no such thing as Unity in Nature, excepting in God; and then it is not sufficient to prove the Catholick Church to be one, because it is united, unless he can prove, that it is not divisibile. But indeed he is a little out in applying his Axiom, for as much as he despises this Mathematical Unity, he can find this indivisible Unity only in a Mathematical Point; and possibly this may be the Reason, why the Church of Rome makes the Pope the Center of Catholick Unity, which is as near a Mathematical Point, as it well can be.

In the same place he very gravely asks; *If the Church of God be distinguished even from the Heretick and the Schismatick, which of the Churches is like to be most Catholick? That which maintains its Unity against Heresy and Schism, or that which is most favourable to the Separation?* No doubt, Sir, that which opposes Heresy and Schism is the most Catholick Church; but

I thought the Question had been not about the *Most*, but the *One* Catholick Church. For one Church may be more Catholick than another, by more strictly adhering to the Catholick Faith and Worship, and yet both of them belong to the same Catholick Church. Well, but what then? Truly I cannot guess, he says, *the Dissenter scarce owns any such Distinctions, or very rarely what?* Do they never talk of Herefy and Schism? nor own that there are any Heresies and Schisms? But they pronounce no *Anathema's*, except one *perhaps*. Against the Church of *Rome* I suppose he means. But *Anathema's* are proper only for General Councils; and this is a new Note of the Catholick Church, which *Bellarmino* did not think of, viz. *Pronouncing Anathema's*, in which the Church of *Rome* has outdone all Churches in the World, and therefore is the most Catholick Church. But they would have Dissenters looked upon as Members of the Aggregate Church, notwithstanding their Dissensions as well as others. Who are these *They*? the Church of *England*: Then they are kinder to Dissenters than the Church of *Rome*, notwithstanding all the good Words they have lately given them. But what then? What then do you say? There is a terrible Then. For this Kindness of the persecuting Church of *England* to the Dissenters proves her to be a Harlot. For 'tis the famous Case brought before King *Solomon*, *Catholicks like the honest Woman would have the whole Child; the Harlot would have the Child divided*. Was ever such Stuff put together? Catholicks are for shutting all out of the Church, and being the whole Church themselves, therefore they are for the whole Child, when they have cut off three parts of it, and divided it in-

to a whole, *united with it self*. Others are so charitable as far as it is possible, to make *a whole Church, the One Catholick Church*, of all the divided Communion of Christendom, and they, like *the Harlot, would have the Child divided*. What a Blessing is Ignorance and Stupidity! The first to find out such Arguments, as all the Wit and Learning in the World could never have discovered; and the second to make Men believe them, and publish them without blushing. But here is enough in all Conscience of this; let us now try if we can pick out any thing, that may deserve an Answer. And that the Reader may the better judg between us, I shall take a Review of *the Brief Discourse concerning the Notes of the Church* in the Method wherein it lies, and consider, what this Answerer and Justifier of *Bellarmino's* Notes has to say against it.

I observed then that the true State of this Controversy about the Notes of the Church, as it is managed by Cardinal Bellarmine, is not, *what it is which makes a Church a true Church*; — but *how among all the Divisions of Christendom, we may find out that only true Church, which is the Mistress of all other Churches, the only Infallible Guide in matters of Faith, and to which alone the Promises of Pardon and Salvation are made*. Now the Answerer grants, that this is the Controversy between us, and says *the Roman-Catholicks put the Question right*. And no doubt but they have Christian Liberty to put what Questions they please; all that I there observed was, that Protestants in the Notes they gave of a Church, answer to that Question, What a true Church is, that Papists give Notes, whereby to know which is the True Church, and

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which is the most reasonable way? shall be examined presently.

Pag. 6.

I began with the Protestant Way, To find out a Church by the essential Properties of the Church, such as the Profession of the true Christian Faith, and the Christian Sacraments rightly and duly administred by Persons rightly ordained, according to the Institution of our Saviour, and the Apostolical Practice. Here he complains that we give but (poor two) Notes of a Christian Church (pag. 12.) But if two be all, they are a great deal better than such fifteen Notes, as are none. And here I considered what Cardinal Bellarmine objects against these Notes.

1. That Notes whereby we will distinguish things, must not be common to other things, but proper and peculiar to that of which it is a Note.——Now I must confess these Notes, as he observes, are common to all Christian Churches, and were intended to be so.——The Protestant Churches do not desire to confine the Notes of the Church to their own private Communion, but are very glad, if all the Churches in the World be as true Churches as themselves. And this, says the Answerer, let me tell him, will be easily granted, tam, quàm, one every whit as good as another. And this, I wish, he could make good, for the sake of his own Church. But will he call this Answering? He cites a place out of Tertullian, which he durst not translate, for fear every English Reader should see that it was to no purpose: That Hereticks, tho they differed from each other, yet did all conspire to oppose the Truth; which is an admirable Argument against all Churches conspiring in the same Faith. But this he says, supposes all Churches to be alike pure, equally Catholick, equally

equally Apostolick. Just as much as to say, that a Man is a reasonable Creature, supposes all Men to be equally wise, and equally honest. The true Faith, and true Sacraments, I hope, may be essential to all true Churches, as Reason is to Humane Nature, and yet all true Churches may not retain the Christian Faith and Sacraments in equal Purity, no more than every Man, who has Reason, reasons equally well and truly. And therefore the Church of *England* can distinguish her self still both from Papists and Fanaticks notwithstanding these Notes.

His next Argument, why these cannot be the Notes of the Church, is, because the *true Faith, and true Sacraments, are essential to the Church*, and therefore can be *no Notes of Discovery*, (*pag. 13.*) according to his former wise Observation, that a Note must be *extra-essential*; which has been examined already. For, says he, *the Question is which is the true Church?* But Protestants think the first Question ought to be, What a true Church is? and then we can know without any other Notes, which is a true Church; as when we know what a Man is, we can easily find out a Man. But *how shall I know half this Essence, true Faith?* &c. *We must either say by consent with Scripture, or consent with the Primitive Church, and then we shall stumble upon the Cardinal's Notes, or somewhat like it.* They I confess will be in danger of a very fatal Stumble, if they stumble either upon Scripture or Antiquity; but we dare venture both. Let them but grant, that true Faith is the Note of a true Church, and we will refer the Trial of our Faith to Scripture, and Antiquity, when they please: Tho Cardinal Bellarmine had so much Wit, as not to refer the Trial of the Churches Faith to Scripture.

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I added, That when we give Notes, which belong to a whole Species; as we must do, when we give the Notes of a true Christian Church, we must give such Notes, as belong to the whole kind, that is, to all true Christian Churches. And though these Notes are common indeed to all true Christian Churches, yet they are proper and peculiar to a true Christian Church. As the essential Properties of a Man are common to all Men, but proper to Mankind: and this is necessary to make them true Notes; for such Notes of a Church, as do not fit all true Churches, cannot be true Notes. But this which is the true Answer to Bellarmine's Argument, he wisely drops.

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As for what the Cardinal urges that all Sorts of Christians think themselves to have the True Faith, and True Sacraments: I answered; I am apt to think they do; but what then? If they have not the True Faith, and True Sacraments, they are not True Churches, whatever they think of it, and yet the True Faith and True Sacraments are certain Notes of the True Church. A Purchase upon a bad Title, which a Man thinks a good one, is not a good Estate; but yet a Purchase upon a Title, which is not only thought to be, but is a good one, is a good Estate.

To this he answers. This is the same Error again: for a good Title, I hope, is essential; 'tis no Note of a good Estate. Oh the Wit of some Disputers! What other Note is there of a good Estate, but a good Title? But he says there are other Notes, which lead to the Discovery of a good Title; what then? they are the Notes of the Title, not of the Estate; they prove a good Title, and a good Title makes a good Estate. And yet, that the Land be not praengaged, be free from all Incumbrances, that there be no flaw in the Demise, I take to be essential to a good Title, and therefore according, to
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our Authors Logick, cannot be Notes neither.

But what is all this to the purpose? *Bellarmin* proves, That the true Faith cannot be the Note of a true Church, because all Sects of Christians pretend to it. I answer, that though those who pretend to the true Faith, and have it not, are not true Churches, yet those, who have the true Faith, are true Churches. As a Purchase upon a bad Title, which a Man thinks a good one, is not a good Estate, but yet a Purchase upon a good Title is a good Estate. To this the Justifier of *Bellarmin* answers, That a good Title is essential, and therefore is no Note of a good Estate. Whereas the Dispute here is not about essential, or extra-essential Notes, but whether the true Faith cannot be a Note of the true Church, because some Men pretend to the true Faith, who have it not. But want of Understanding is necessary to make some Men Answerers of Books, which Men of Understanding know they cannot answer.

The Cardinal's second Objection against the Protestant Notes of a Church is, *That the Notes of any thing must be more known than the thing it self*; this I granted, Now says he, *which is the true Church, is more knowable, than which is the true Faith*: and this I denied, for this plain reason, *because the true Church cannot be known without knowing the true Faith*: For no Church is a true Church, which does not profess the true Faith. Now says our Answerer, *This being denied, we prove it thus, &c.* (Pag. 15.) But methinks, he should first have answered the Argument, before he had gone to proving; but that it seems is not his Talent. Well, but how does he prove, that the true Church may be known before we know the true Faith? Admirably I assure you! *If the*

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the Church be the Pillar of Truth, raised up aloft, that it may be conspicuous to all Men, it must be more manifest than the Truth. This Pillar raised aloft is a new Notion, which I suppose he learnt from the Monument at *London-Bridge*, which indeed is very visible; but other wiser Writers *by the Pillar and Ground of Truth*, prove, that the Church is the Foundation, whereon Truth is built; but that would not serve his purpose, to make the Church more visible than the Truth, for he knows that the Foundation is not so visible, as that which is built on it: And in the next Page he honestly confesses, that the true Faith is the Foundation of the Church, and therefore proves that the true Church cannot be known by the true Faith; for *that is as if I should say, I cannot know the House unless I see the Foundation, the next way to overturn it.* So dangerous a thing are Metaphors, which prove backward and forward, as a Man fancies. But let the Church *be a Pillar raised aloft*, or a Foundation-Pillar, or what Pillar he pleases, must not we know the Church, before we know it to be a Pillar of Truth? Or, can we know which Church is the Pillar of Truth, before we know what Truth is?

Well! But let us now look to our selves, for he undertakes to demonstrate it. *The Fruits of the Spirit, the Graces, are more known than the Spirit it self.* Ergo, the true Church must be known before the true Faith. *The outward profession of Faith more than the inward profession.* Ergo, The true Church must be known before the outward profession of the true Faith, which makes a true Church. *The Concrete more than the Abstract, the Believer than the Belief.* I can know the Men before

fore I know their Faith, *Ergo*, the true Church must be known before the true Faith. He is a very hard-hearted Man, who will not allow this for Demonstration; but he is a very good-natured Man, who will allow it to be Sense.

Well! But he has a Distinction, that will do the Business. *Aliud notius nobis & aliud natura, i. e.* Some things are more knowable in themselves, and some things are more knowable to us: But we are enquiring which is most knowable to us, the true Faith, or the true Church.

He grants then, that True Faith being a Constituent of, or essential to the Church, may be said to be *Naturâ notior*, first known in the Order of Nature. But we would not have these Methods confounded: For if Faith be essential, 'tis the less known to us for that very reason; because the first Constituents of a Compound are last known, except to the Maker. 'Tis more manifest to us, that we are Flesh and Blood, though God knows, that we are Dust and Ashes. How happy is the Age, that has produced so great a Schoolman as this, to whom the great *Aquinas* himself is but a meer Novice! The Church is a compound Body, in which Faith is mixed and blended, as the four Elements are in Natural Bodies: And therefore as we can more easily know what a Stone or a Tree is, than see the four Elements in it, Fire and Air and Water and Earth, of which it is compounded, and which are so mixt together, as to become invisible in their own Natures; so the Church is more knowable than the true Faith, which is so compounded with the Church, as to become invisible
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it self: Nay to be as much changed and transformed in the Composition, as Dust and Ashes is into Flesh and Blood: And thus I confess, he has hit upon the true Reason, why the true Church must be known before the true Faith, because the Church of *Rome* (which is this true Church) has so changed and transformed the Faith, that unless the Faith can be known by the Church, the Church can never be known by the Faith. How much is one grain of common Sense, better than all these Philosophical Subtilties? For indeed the Church is not a compound Body, but a Society of Men professing the Faith of Christ, and the only difference between them and other Societies is the Christian Faith, and therefore the Christian Faith is the only thing whereby the Church is to be known, and to be distinguished from other Bodies of Men; and therefore the Church cannot be known without the Faith; unless I can know any thing without knowing that, by which alone it is what it is: And when there are several Churches in the World, and a Dispute arises, which is the true Church, there is no other possible way of deciding it without knowing the true Faith; for it is the true Faith, which makes a true Church, *not as Dust and Ashes make Flesh and Blood*, but as a true Faith makes true Believers, and true Believers a true Church; and tho that Society of Men, which is the Church is visible, yet the true Church is no more visible than the true Faith; for to see a Church is to see a Society of Men who profess the true Faith, and how to see that without seeing the true Faith, is past my Understanding.

In the next place the Cardinal urges; That we cannot know what true Scripture is, nor what is the true Interpretation of Scripture, but from the Church; and therefore we must know the Church, before we can know the true Faith. To this I answered, As for the first, I readily grant, that at this distance from the writing the Books of the New Testament, there is no way to assure us, that they were written by the Apostles, or Apostolical men, and owned for inspired Writings, but the Testimony of the Church in all Ages. And our Answerer saies, I begin now to answer honestly, (p. 17.) and I am very glad I can please him. But it seems, I had pleased him better, if I would have called it an *Infallible Tradition*; but that *Infallible* is a word we Protestants are not much used to, when applied to *Tradition*; it satisfies us, if it be a very credible Tradition, the Truth of which we have no reason to suspect. But I have lost our Answerers favour for ever, by adding, *But herein we do not consider them as a Church, but as credible Witnesses*. This makes him sigh to think, how loth men are to own the Church. For these company of men so attesting, were Christians, not Vagrants, or idle Praters of Strange news in ridiculous Stories, (I hope not, for then they could not be credible Witnesses) but were agreed in the Attestation of such a Divine Volume, not only as a Book (which would do very little Service indeed) but as a Rule, as an Oracle. All this I granted; but still the question is, whether that Testimony they give to the Scriptures, relies upon their Authority, considered as a Church, or considered only as credible Witnesses. And when this Author shall think fit to Answer what I there urge to prove, that they must not be considered as a Church, but as credible Witnesses, I shall think of a Reply, or shall yield the cause.

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Answerer is a most unmerciful man at comparisons. For, saies he, *to tell us we cannot know the Church, but by the Scripture, is to tell us that we cannot know a piece of Gold without a pair of Scales.* The weight of Gold, I suppose he means, and then it is pretty right; and if we must weigh Gold after our Father, I suppose, we may weigh it after the Church too, tho She be our Mother. Or *that a Child cannot know his Father, till he comes to read Philosophy, and understand the Secrets of Generation:* And it is well, if he can know him then: This, I confess, is exceeding apposite; for a Child must be a Traditionary Believer, and take his Mothers word (as Papiists believe the Mother Church) who is his Father.

That we could not understand the true Interpretation of Scripture neither, without the Church. This I also denied, and gave my reasons for it, which our Answerer, according to his method of answering Books, takes no notice of, but gives his Reasons on the other side. I affirmed, *That the Scriptures are very intelligible in all things necessary to Salvation, to honest and diligent Readers.* Instead of this, he saies I affirm, *That every honest and diligent Reader knows the Sense* (of Scripture, it must be) *in all things necessary to Salvation;* which differ as much, as being intelligible, and being actually understood, tho I will excuse him so far, that I verily believe he had no dishonest Intention in changing my Words, but did not understand the difference between them: But, saies he, *did not St. Peter write to honest and diligent Readers, when he warns them of wresting some places in St. Paul to their own Destruction, as others also did.* As they did other Scriptures also, St. Peter saies; but he saies too, that they were the *unlearned and the unstable*, who did thus. And tho the Scriptures be intelligible, such men need a guide,
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not to dictate to them, but to expound Scripture, and help them to understand it; but does St. Peter, therefore warn them against reading the Scriptures, or direct them to receive the Sense of Scripture only from the Church? Or say, that honest and diligent Readers cannot understand them without the Authority of the Church? But it seems, there are several Articles very necessary to Salvation, which men cannot agree about, no not all Protestants, as the *Divinity of the Son of God, the necessity of good Works, the distinction of Sins mortal, and less mortal* (which is a new distinction, unless by *less mortal*, he means Venial, that is, not mortal at all) *the necessity of keeping the Lords day, and using the Lords Prayer.* Now these points are either intelligibly taught in the Scripture, or they are not; if not, how does he know they are in the Scripture? If they be, why cannot an honest and diligent Reader understand that which is intelligible? That all men do not agree about the Sense of Scripture in all points, is no better argument to prove that the Scriptures are not intelligible, than that Reason it self is not intelligible; for all men do not agree about that neither.

Well, but he will allow, *That honest Readers may arrive to the understanding of that part of Scripture, which the light of nature suggests: That we must not steal, defraud; we must do as we will be done by,* (p. 19.). But he little thinks what he hath done in granting this; for then, if the Church should expound Scripture against the light of Nature, honest Readers may understand the Scripture otherwise; and if the Church should be found tripping in such matters, honest Readers might be apt to question her Infallibility in other cases; for those who once mistake, can never be Infallible: And yet this light

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of Nature teaches a great many shrewd things; and the Scripture teaches them too; and therefore, in these matters, honest and diligent Readers may understand the Scriptures, tho it be against the Exposition of the Church; as, That Divine Worship must be given to none but God: That God, who is an invisible Spirit, must not be worshipped by material and visible Images: That public Prayers ought to be in a Language which is understood by the People: That Marriage is honourable among all Men; That Faith is to be kept with all Men; That every Soul must be subject to the higher Powers: That none can judicially forgive Sins, but only God: That to forgive Sin, is not to punish it, and therefore God does not punish for those Sins which he has wholly pardoned: And other such like things, are taught by the light of Nature, as well as Scripture; and we thank him heartily, that he will give us leave to understand these things. But he proceeds, *'Tis the Revelation part, the Mysterious part, which is properly called the holy Scripture, which is not so perspicuous.* What, are not the words perspicuous and intelligible? To what purpose then were they writ? Or, is it the thing which is above our Comprehension? but that does not hinder, but we may understand what the Scripture teaches, tho we do not fully comprehend it. For I would know, whether they fully comprehend the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity and Incarnation, the Natures and Person of Christ, which were the Subject of the *Arian, Nestorian, and Eutychian* Heresies; when the Church teaches these things, I suppose they will not say they do; and yet they will own that they can understand what the Church teaches about them: And then, tho they cannot comprehend these mysteries; yet they may as well understand what the

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the Scripture, as what the Church teaches about them. Now, saies our Author, to say the Scripture is plain to every honest private Reader in these Arcana, is to deny and cassate all Church History; make Oecumenical Councils ridiculous, run down all Synods and Convocations, that ever were or shall be. Why so, I pray? Does Church-History, or Oecumenical Councils, all Convocations and Synods declare, That the Scriptures are not intelligible in these matters? Or that a private honest diligent Reader cannot understand them? How came they then to determine them for Articles of Faith, by their own Authority, or by the Authority of Scripture? Should Synods and Convocations, and Oecumenical Councils, determine that for an Article of Faith, which is not plain and intelligible in Scripture, they were ridiculous indeed, and there were an end of their Authority.

And here he appeals to the Testimonies produced by the Cardinal, out of *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and *St. Augustin*; which have been so often answered already, that I do not think it worth the while to engage with this Answerer about them; let the Reader, if he pleases, consult some late Books to this purpose; as that Learned Vindication of the Answer to the Royal Papers about Church Authority; and the *Pillar and ground of Truth*. But I cannot pass on without taking notice of his unanswerable Argument to prove, *That the Church of Rome understands St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and by consequence the Articles of Justification, whether by Faith alone, or Works, better than all the Lay-Readers of the Reformation, viz. because he can never be perswaded that any private man should understand an Epistle of St Paul, better than the Church to which it was written. How unworthy is it to*
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opine the contrary? And how silly is it to think, that those must necessarily understand an Epistle best, to whom it was written? But if those Christians at *Rome*, to whom St. *Paul* wrote (for he takes no notice of any formed and settled Church there, at the writing of his Epistle, and therefore does not direct it to the Church, as he does in other Epistles, but *to the Saints that are at Rome*. I say, if those Christians) might be supposed at that time, (when the state of the Controversy among them was generally known) to understand this Epistle better than we can now, yet what is this to the Church of *Rome*, at sixteen hundred years distance? However, by this Rule, we may understand all St. *Paul's* other Epistles, as well as the Church of *Rome*, and that will serve our purpose: And yet methinks, if the Churches to which the Epistles were sent, are the only Authentick Expositors of such Epistles, all those Churches to whom St. *Paul* wrote, should have been preserved to this day, to have expounded those Epistles to us, and yet not one of them is now in being, excepting the Church of *Rome*; and therefore, at least we must make what shift we can to expound them our selves, for the Church of *Rome* can pretend no greater right in them than the Church of *England*.

And thus I came in the second place to consider the Cardinals use of Notes, and found several faults with them: 1. *That he gives Notes to find out which is the true Church, before we know what a true Church is; whereas there are two Inquiries in order of nature before this, viz. Whether there be a true Church, or not; and what it is; And though the Cardinal takes it for granted, that there is a Church, I demanded a proof of it, that they would give me some Notes whereby to prove that there is a true Church.*

Church. This demand amazes our Answerer, and makes him cross himself and fall to his Beads, *Hear, O Heavens! and give ear, O earth!* But this is a Devil that wo'nt be conjured down; let him either give me some Notes to prove, that there is a Church; or tell me, how I shall know it. Yes, that he will do, for *it is self-evident*, he saies, *that there is a Church*, (p. 20.) *as it is, that there is a Sun in the Firmament, or else the Heathens could never see it.* But what do the Heathens see? a Christian Church. Do they then believe the Holy Catholick Church? why then does he call them Heathens? and if they see a Church, and do not believe it to be a Church, then it is such a seeing of a Church, as does not prove that there is a Church; for if it did, then all that see the Church would believe it, as all that see the Sun, believe that there is a Sun. Good works indeed may be seen, as he learnedly proves; and a Jewish Synagogue may be seen, and Christian Oratories and Chappels with Crosses upon them, and this may prove that those who built them, believed in a Crucified God, which is all he alledges to prove, that it is self-evident that there is a Church; by which I see something also that he does not know, What it is to see a Church; Though I told him before, *That to see a com-* Disc. p. 14.
pany of men, who call themselves a Church, is not to see a Church. For a Church must have a Divine Original and Institution, and therefore there is no seeing a Church, without seeing its Charter; for there can be no other Note or mark of the being of a Church, but the Institution of it.

I observed, *That the use of Notes in the Church of Rome is to find out the Church before and without the Scriptures; for if they admit of a Scripture-proof, they must allow, that we can know and understand the Scriptures without*

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without the authority or interpretation of the Church, which undermines the very foundation of Popery. In answer to this he says, Nothing is more easie and familiar (but that men live to be troublesome to their Friends) than that the Scriptures must be known by the Church, and the Church may be known (besides its own evidence) by the Scriptures.

This I believe he has heard so often said, without considering it, that it is become *very easie and familiar* to him; but it is the hardest thing in the world to me, and therefore begging leave of him for being so troublesome, I must desire him to explain to me how two things can be known by each other, when neither of them can be known first; for if the Son must beget the Father, and the Father beget the Son, which of them must be begotten first?

But he has an admirable proof of this way of knowing the Church by the Scripture, and the Scripture by the Church. For *so St. Peter exhorts the wife to good conversation, that she may thereby win the husband to Christianity, even without the Word, without the Holy Scripture: Implying, that a man may be brought over to Christianity both ways, by the Church, and by the Scripture.* Suppose this, what is this to knowing the Scripture by the Church, and the Church by the Scripture? The pious and modest conversation of the wife, may give her husband a good opinion of her Religion, and may be the first occasion of his inquiring into it, which may end in his conversion, and so may the holy and exemplary lives of Christians do; but does the Husband in this case resolve his faith into the authority of his Wife without the Scripture? and then resolve the authority of his wife into the authority of the Scripture? if St.

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Peter had said this indeed, I should have thought we might as reasonably have given this authority to the Church, as to a Wife.

2ly. I observed, *Another blunder in this dispute* a Disc. p. 15. *about Notes is, that they give us Notes whereby to find out the true Catholick Church, before we know what a particular Church is* — because the Catholick Church is nothing else but all the true Christian Churches in the world, united together by one common faith and worship, and such acts of communion as distinct Churches are capable of, and obliged to; every particular Church, which professes the true faith and worship of Christ, is a true Christian Church, and the Catholick Church is all the true Christian Churches in the world. — And therefore there can be no Notes of a true Church but what belong to all the true Christian Churches in the World. Which shows how absurd it is, when they are giving Notes of a True Church, to give Notes of a true Catholick, and not of a true particular Church: when I know what makes a particular Church a true Church, I can know what the Catholick Church is, which signifies all true particular Churches, which are the one Mystical body of Christ; but I can never know what a true Catholick Church is, without knowing what makes a particular Church a true Church; for all Churches have the same nature, and are homogeneal parts of the same body.

This I perceive our Answerer did not understand one word of, and therefore says nothing to the main argument, which is to prove that those who will give Notes of the Church, must give such Notes as

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are proper to all true particular Churches; for there can be no other true Notes of a Church, but what belong to all true Churches, because all true Churches have the same Nature and Essence; which spoils the Cardinal's design of Notes to find out the one Catholick Church, which all Christians must communicate in, and out of which there is no Salvation. And therefore, instead of touching upon the main point, he runs out into a new Harangue about Unity and Catholicism; what Unity and Communion makes a Catholick Church; whether the Catholick Church be the aggregate of all Churches, or only of Sound and Orthodox Churches, which has been considered already, and is nothing to the purpose here. For the only single question here is, Whether I can know the Catholick Church, before I know what a true particular Church is; and consequently, whether the Notes of the Church ought not to be such, as belong to all true particular Churches.

By this Rule, I briefly examined Cardinal Bellarmine's Notes; Those which belonged to all true Churches, which very few of them do; I allow to be true Notes, but not peculiar to the Church of Rome. *As the 6th, The agreement and consent in Doctrine with the Ancient and Apostolick Church. And the 8th, The Holiness of its Doctrine; are the chief, if not the only Notes of this nature, and these we will stand or fall by.* And because I said, we will stand or fall by these Notes, the Answerer endeavours to shew that they do not belong to the Church of *England*; but whether they belong to the Church of *Rome*, and do not belong to us, was not my business to consider in a general

ral Discourse about Notes; but it has been examined since, in the Examination of those particular Notes, and there the Reader may find it. But our Answerer according to his old wont, has pickt out as unlucky instances, as the greatest Adversary of the Church of Rome could have done, viz: the Doctrine of Justification and Repentance, which are not so corrupted by the very worst Fanaticks, as they are by the Church of Rome, witness their Doctrines of *Confession and Penance*; I may add, of *Merits and Indulgences*, for want of which, he quarrels with the Reformation. Other Notes, I observed, were not properly Notes of the true Church, any otherwise than as they are Testimonies to the Truth of common Christianity: Such as his 9th, the Efficacy of Doctrine: The 10th, the Holiness of the Lives of the first Authors and Fathers of our Religion. As for the Efficacy of Doctrine, he saies, That should bear Testimony to the Church also, if it be true, that more are converted to the Catholick Church, than Apostatize from it. Let him read the Examination of the 9th Note for this. But if it be true also, that the Roman Catholicks do convert more to the Christian Faith, than any other sort of Christians, (as the Spaniards converted the poor Indians) this follows undeniably, that they believe they are more bound to spread the Christian Religion than any other. And what if they did believe so, are not others as much bound as they? And what follows from hence? That they are the only true Church, because they are more zealous in propagating Christianity? Does this relate to the Efficacy of Doctrine, or to the Zeal of the Preacher? But he says, *The Pharisees compassing Sea and Land to make a Profelyte, proved them to be the best and most*

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zealous of all the Jewish party, tho they made them ten times more the Children of Hell, than they were before. I think none but our Author would have had so little Wit, as to have justified the Church of *Rome* by the Zeal of the *Pharisees*; for tho, as he says, our Saviour's *Wo against the Pharisees*, was not *precisely* intended against their Zeal; yet this proves that the greatest Corrupters of the Faith, may be the most zealous to propagate their Errors; and therefore such a Zeal does not prove them to be the best men, nor the truest Church.

Thus I said the 11th Note, *the glory of Miracles*, and the 12th, *the spirit of Prophecie*, are Testimonies to the Religion, not primarily to the Church.

To which he answers, *Let no man be so besotted as to say, that all Miracles of a later date are delusions*. Fear not, Sir, no Miracles, neither late nor early, are delusions, but some delusions are called Miracles, witness the Miracles that poor *Jetzer* felt. But the question is, Whether true Miracles prove that particular Church in which they are done, the only true Church; or only give testimony to the Religion in confirmation of which they are wrought. *The spirit of Prophecie* also, he says, *belongs to the Church, unless we find that all the true Churches in the Circle pretend to it*. All that pretend to a Religion revealed by Prophecie, pretend to the spirit of Prophecie; but all do not pretend in this age to have the gift of Prophecie, though they may as justly pretend to it, as the Church of *Rome*. See the Answer to the 12th Note.

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I added, *That the 13th, 14th, 15th Notes, I doubted would prove no Notes at all, because they are not always true, and at best uncertain. The 13th is the confession of Adversaries, which he says, will carry a cause in our Temporal Courts. And good reason too, because they are supposed to speak nothing but what they know, and what the evidence of truth extorts from them; but how the Adversaries of Christianity should come to know so well, which is the true Church, who believe no Church at all, is somewhat mysterious; and yet the Cardinal is miserably put to it to make out this Note, as may be seen in the Answer. The 15th, Temporal felicity, he says, will evidence the Church, as Job's later state did evidence his being in favour with God. But what did his former state do? Was he not then in favour with God too? but would any man talk at this rate, who remembers, that Christ was crucified, and his Church persecuted for three hundred years? The 14th, the unhappy Exit of the enemies of the Church, he says, Count Teckely may be a witness of it, who sides with Infidels against the Church, and is accordingly blest. And what thinks he of the misfortunes of some great Princes, who have been as zealous for the Church?*

His third and fourth Notes, I said, were not Notes of a Church, but Gods promises made to his Church. And here he triumphs mightily; Is there such opposition then between Notes and Promises? and finds out some promises which he says are Notes of the Church; I shall not examine that, because it is nothing to the
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the purpose; for if there be some Promises which are not Notes of the Church, I am safe; for I did not say, that no Promises could be Notes, but that these were not Notes, but Promises, and gave my reasons for it, why these particular Promises could not be Notes. As for the third, *A long duration, that it shall never fail*; I said, *this could never be a Note till the day of judgment. A fine time*, he says, *to chuse our Religion in the mean while*; but thanks be to God, we have other Notes of a Church than this, and therefore need not wait till the day of Judgment, to know the true Church. But it is certain, the duration of the Church till the end of the World is such a mark of the Church as cannot be known till the end of the World. The fourth, *Amplitude and extent is not to distinguish one Christian Church from another, but to distinguish the Christian Church from other Religions*; and then I doubt this Prophecie has not received its just accomplishment yet, for all the Christian Churches together bear but a small proportion to the rest of the world. And if this promise be not yet accomplished, it cannot be a Note of the Church. But the Reader may see all this fairly stated in the examination of these Notes.

His fifth Note, *The Succession of Bishops in the Church of Rome, from the Apostles time till now, I grant, is a Note of the Roman Church*; and the Succession of Bishops in the Greek Church, is as good a Note of the Greek Church; and any Churches, which have been later planted, who have Bishops in Succession from any of the Apostles, or Apostolick Bishops, by this Note are as good Churches as they. This he very honestly grants,

grants, and thereby confesses, that this Note will not prove the Church of Rome to be the one Catholick Church, which the Cardinal intended by it. Now because I said, *This Note is common to all true Churches, and therefore can do the Church of Rome no Service.* He takes me up, *All true Churches! then where is your Communion with Luther's or Calvin's Disciples? They do not so much as pretend to Succession.* Nor is this the Dispute now, whether those Churches which have not a Succession of Bishops, are true Churches; but if he will allow a Succession of Bishops to be a Note of a true Church, all those Churches are true Churches, which have this Succession, as the Greek Church, and the Church of England have; and therefore, this Note can do no Service to the Church of Rome, as not being peculiar to it. But as for what he says, *That Succession of Doctrine, without Succession of Office, is a poor Plea.* I must needs tell him, I think it is a much better Plea then Succession of Office, without Succession of Doctrine. For I am sure, that is not a safe Communion, where there is not a Succession of Apostolical Doctrine; but whether the want of a Succession of Bishops, will in all Cases Unchurch, will admit of a greater Dispute: I am sure a true Faith in Christ, with a true Gospel Conversation, will save men; and some Learned Romanists defend that old Definition of the Church, that it is *Cætus Fidelium*, the company of the Faithful, and will not admit Bishops or Pastors into the Definition of a Church.

Joan. Laun.
Epist. Vol. 8.
ep. 13. Nicol.
Gatinæo.

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His seventh Note, I own, is home to his purpose, That that is the only true Church, which is united to the Bishop of Rome, as to its Head. If he could prove this, it must do his Business without any other Notes. — But it is like the Confidence of a Jesuit, to make that the Note of the Church, which is the chief Subject of the Dispute. Very well, says our Answerer, so Irenæus, so St. Cyprian, St. Ambrose, St. Hierom, Optatus, St. Austin, are answered, for none of these can turn the Scale. Nor did any of these Fathers ever say, That the Bishop of Rome is the Head of the Church. This is the Dispute still, and will be the Dispute, till the Church of Rome quit her absurd claims to it: But he says, We of the Church of England should consider, that not above 100 years ago, we communicated with the Apostolick See. And does that make the Church of Rome, the Head of the Church? But have we grounds enough for such a Breach, as we have made? It is ground enough sure, to Renounce our Subjection to the Bishop of Rome, if he have no right to claim it. But Transubstantiation, and the Worlhip of Images, and Addresses to Saints, he thinks very harmless things. But the mischief is, we do no think them so. But this is not a place to dispute these matters.

His first Note concerning the name Catholick, I observed, makes every Church a Catholick Church, which will call it self so. And here he learnedly disputes about some indelible names, which the providence of God orders to be so for great Ends. St. Paul directs his Epistle to the Romans, i.e. he hopes to the Roman Catholicks, p.34. But a Roman Catholick was an unknown name in those days, and many Ages after. But at that

that time the world in the Apostles phrase was in Communion with her. Where has the Apostle any such Phrase? And yet we are now a disputing not about Catholick Communion, but about the name *Roman Catholick Church*. Whereas it does not appear, that the Romans had at that time so much as the Name of the Church, as I observed before; and the very Name of the *Catholick Church* cannot be proved so Ancient as that time: And her Faith being spoken of, which he interprets, her being admired throughout the whole World: whatever it proves, does not prove that She had then the Name of the Catholick Church. He adds, *It is not without something of God, that She keeps the name still*: But how does She keep it? She will call her self Catholick, when no Body else will allow her to be so; and thus any Church may keep this Name, which did Originally belong to all true Orthodox Churches: As for Hereticks, they have challenged the Name, and kept it too among themselves, as the Church of *Rome* does, tho it belonged no more to them, than it does to her. His other indelible names of Times and Places, he may make the best of he can. But let all concerned in *Black-fryars* and *Austin-fryars*, and the House of *Chartreux*, which has so miraculously preserved its Name, look to it; for he seems to hope, that these indelible Names are preserved for some good purpose.

I added, The name *Catholick* does not declare what a Church is, but in what Communion it is; and is no Note of a true Church, unless it be first proved, that they are true Churches, which are in Communion with each other. For if three parts in four, of all

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the Churches in the World, were very corrupt and degenerate in Faith and Worship, and were in one Communion, this would be the most Catholick Communion, as Catholick signifies the most General and Universal; but yet, the fourth part, which is sincere, would be the best and truest Church, and the Catholick Church, as that signifies the Communion of all Orthodox and pure Churches.

This Distinction of *Catholick*, our Answerer likes well, and says it *does not hurt them, for that case is yet to come*, viz. that the most corrupt Communion should be most Catholick or Universal; but that was not the force of the Argument, nor any part of it; tho it may be it is too true; but the Argument was this, That the bare Name of *Catholick* cannot prove a Church to be a true Church, because that does not relate to its Nature and Essence, but to its Communion: Now *Catholick Communion* signifies, either the most universal Communion, or the Communion only of pure and Orthodox Churches, be their number more or less. If we take it in the first Sense, the most Catholick Communion may be the most corrupt; for it may so happen, that the greater number of Churches, which are in Communion with each other, may be very corrupt. If we take it in the second Sense, we must first know, whether those Churches are Pure and Orthodox, before we can tell, whether they be Catholick Churches; and therefore, in both Senses, the bare Name of Catholick cannot prove a Church to be a true Church; for we must first know, whether they be true, as that signifies Pure and Orthodox Churches,

Churches, before we can know, whether they be Catholick.

But he says, *It is not probable, that God would spread such a Temptation and Stumbling-block before his own People; yet, if he should for Example sake, have suffered Lutheranism or Cranmerism to have spread to such a measure, the palpableness of the Schism would have been security, perhaps, sufficient to keep all prudent Persons where they were.* This is nothing to the present Argument, (as indeed it would be surprizing to find him say any thing to the purpose) but yet, if the most Catholick Communion, as that signifies the most Universal (tho the Notes does not refer to Catholick Communion, but to the name Catholick) were a Note of the true Church, it is not sufficient to say, *That it is probable that God will not suffer a corrupt Communion to be the most Universal; but he must prove, that God has promised this shall not be: And, if according to this Supposition, Lutheranism or Cranmerism had prevailed, three parts in four over the Church, how could the palpableness of the Schism secure his prudent Man from the Infection? for if three parts of the Church were divided from the fourth, why should a prudent Man charge so much the greater number with the Schism? Why should the three parts be the Schismatics, and not the fourth?*

3ly, I observed another Mystery of finding the true Church by Notes, is to pick out of all the Christian Churches in the World, one Church which we must own for the only Catholick Church, and re-

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jeed all other Churches, as Heretical, or Schismatical, or Uncatholick Churches, who refuse Obedience and Subjection to this one Catholick Church. For if this be not the intent of it, what do all the Notes of the Church signifie to prove, that the Church of Rome is the only true Catholick Church? And if they do not prove this, the Cardinal has lost his Labour.

Now I observed, That there are many things to be proved here, before we are ready for the Notes of the Church. They must first prove, that there is but one true Church in the World. Or, as I had expressed it before, One Church, which is the Mistress of all other Churches, and the only Principle and Center of Catholick Unity. To this he Answers, (p. 37.) That there is but one true Church, ought to be proved; (*Credo unam Sanctam* or doth it seem, not prove it) but if there were as many Churches, as Provinces, if they are true, they are one, as hath been explained. Nor stands it with the very Institution of the Creed, to say, I believe many true Churches; no more than to say, I believe in many true Faiths; (which I suppose there is some new Institution for also, believing in the true Faith) for if they be true, say I, they are one (*Harp not therefore any more on that jarring String.*) It is really a miserable case for a Church, which is able to speak somewhat better for her self, to be exposed by such Advocates, as do not understand her own Principles. For will any learned *Romanist* deny, that there are several particular true Churches? Or, will any Protestant deny, that all true Churches are one Catholick Church, which we profess in our Creed? But the Controversy between us and the Cardinal, is quite

quite of a different nature, not whether there are any particular true Churches, nor whether all the true Churches in the World make one Catholick Church; but whether the Church of *Rome* (which considered in it self is but a particular Church) be the only true Catholick Church, the center of Catholick Unity? so that no Church is a true Church, but only by communion with, and subjection to the Church of *Rome*. Now this he can never prove by the Notes of a true Church, unless he first prove, that there is but one particular Church, the communion with, and subjection to which makes all other Churches true Churches: For if there be more true Churches than one, which owe subjection to no other Church, but only a friendly and brotherly correspondence; then though his Notes of a Church could prove the Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, yet they could not prove, that all other Churches must be subject to the Church of *Rome*. The Church of *England* may be a true Church still, though she renounce obedience to the Bishop of *Rome*.

But he undertakes to prove the Church of *Rome*, not to be the *Mistress*, which as it may be construed, is *invidious* (though she challenges all the authority of a *Mistress*) but the *Mother* of other Churches. And if he could do it, it were nothing to the present argument, which is not, Whether the Church of *Rome* be the *Mistress* or *Mother* (which he pleases) of all other Churches, but whether the bare Notes of a true Church can prove this prerogative of the Church of *Rome*, when there are other true Churches

Churches besides her self. But yet his arguments to prove this are very considerable :

1st. Because *the Church of Rome is acknowledged to be so by all in communion with her, (P.37.)* which is indeed unanswerable : The Church of Rome her self, and all in communion with her, say, she is the Mother of all other Churches, and therefore she is so.

2^{dly}, *The Learned King James the First, did not stick to own her.* Did King James the First own the Pope's Supremacy ?

3. *To us in England 'tis past denial, our Mother and Nurse too.* Our step-mother we will own her, and nothing more. But 'tis her authority that keeps up in England, above all other Reformed Churches, our Bishops, our Liturgy, our Cathedrals ; by her Records, her Evidences, they stand the shock of Antichristian Adversaries. This is strange news ! We are indeed then more beholden to the Church of Rome, than we thought for ; but does the Church of Rome allow our Bishops, or our Liturgy ? how then does her Authority keep them up ? truly only because she cannot pull them down, and I pray God she may never be able to do it. She is not *our Principle*, as he speaks, and never shall be *our Center* again. His fourth Argument is from *Vitruvius* (which I believe is the first time it was used) *from the situation of Rome for the Empire of the World*, which he thinks holds as well for the Empire of the Church. And so he concludes with *our Lords Elogies of St. Peter's Chair*, which I could never meet with yet. This is a formidable man, especially considering how many such Writers the Church of Rome is furnished with.

I added,

I added, *That they must prove, that the Catholicks Church does not signifie all the particular true Churches that are in the World, but some one Church, which is the fountain of Catholick Unity*: That is, says he, he should say, *not only signifie all, but also some one*, P. 39. No, Sir, I say, *not signifie all, but some one*. The Cardinal proposes to find out by his Notes the one true Catholick Church among all the Communion of Christendom; and to prove that the Church of Rome is this Catholick Church. Now I say, this is a senseless undertaking, unless he can prove, that the Catholick Church does not signifie all the particular true Churches, which make the one Church and Body of Christ, but some one Church, which is the fountain of Catholick Unity, and Communion with which, gives the denomination of Catholick Churches to all others. Now what has our Answerer to say to this, besides his Criticism of *all*, and *some one*? Truly he fairly grants it, and says, that *other Churches, as daughters of the Mother-church, are formally Catholick; but take the Mother by her self, and she is fundamentally Catholick*. But this I say, ought to have been proved, that there is any one Church which alone is the Catholick Church, as the foundation of Catholick Unity; which the Cardinal's Notes cannot prove. That the Catholick Church began in one single Church, (as he says) I readily grant, and became Catholick by spreading it self all over the World; but thus the Church at *Jerusalem*, not at *Rome*, was the *Matrix*, as he speaks, of the Catholick Church, which yet gave the Church of *Jerusalem* no prehemineny or authority over all other Churches. But the Church of *Rome* does not pretend her self to be *fundamentally Catholick* in this sense,

sense, that she was the first Church, but that by virtue of Saint *Peter's* Chair, the Sovereign Authority of the Church is seated in her, and none can belong to the Catholick Church, but those who embrace her Communion, and submit to her authority. Which shows how well our Answerer understood this Controversie, when he says, (*Pag. 40.*) *Time was when the Church of Jerusalem was so,* (that is, the Catholick Church, as it was the first and only Church, and the Matrix of all other Churches) *or the Church of Antioch,* (which never was so) *then why not the Church of Rome? What think you, in the sense given?* The Church of *Rome* does not challenge to be the Catholick Church in the sense now given, *i.e.* as the first and original Church; and if she did, all the World knows, she was not; and the sense now given will not prove the Church of *Rome* to be the Catholick Church, in the sense in which she claims it. But this is intolerable to dispute with men, who do not understand what they dispute about. To hasten then to a conclusion; for if my Reader, as I suspect, is by this time sick of Reading, he may easily guess, how sick I am of Writing.

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The last thing I objected against *Bellarmin's* Notes was, That they pretend to find out an infallible Church by Notes, on whose authority we must relie for the whole Christian Faith, even for the Holy Scriptures themselves. For suppose he had given us the Notes of a true Church—before we can hence conclude, that this Church is the infallible Guide, and uncontrollable Judge of Controversies, we must be satisfied that the Church is infallible.—This can never be proved but by Scripture,

Scripture; for unless Christ have bestowed Infallibility on the Church, I know not how we can prove she has it; and whether Christ have done it or not, can never be proved but by the Scriptures: So that a man must read the Scriptures, and use his own judgment to understand them, before it can be proved to him, that there is an Infallible Church; and therefore those who resolve the belief of the Scripture into the Authority of the Church, cannot without great impudence, urge the Authority of the Scriptures to prove the Churches Infallibility; and yet thus they all do; nay, prove their Notes of the Church from Scripture, as the Cardinal does. To which our Adversary answers: Infallibility and Transubstantiation; God forgive all the stirs that have been made upon their account. Amen; say I, and so far we are agreed.

He makes some little offers at proving an Infallible Judg, or at least a Judg which must have the final decision of Controversies, whether Infallible or not; this is not the present dispute, but how we shall know whether the Church be Infallible or not? If by the Scriptures, how we shall know them without the Church?

To avoid a Circle here of proving the Church by the Scriptures, and the Scriptures by the Church, he says, *There are other convictions whereby the Word of God first pointed at by the Church, makes out its Divine original.* But let him answer plainly, Whether we can know the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and understand the true sense of them, without

out the Infallible authority of the Church? If he will say we can, we are agreed, and then we will grant, that we may find out the Church by the Scripture; but then he must not require us afterwards to receive the Scripture and interpretation of it upon the authority of the Church; And so farewell to Popery.

As for that advice I gave Protestants, *Where they dispute with Papists, whatever they do at other times, not to own the belief of the Scriptures, till they had proved them in their way by the authority of the Church: and then we should quickly see, what blessed work they would make of it: How they would prove their Churches Infallibility, and what fine Notes we should have of a Church, when we had rejected all their Scripture-proofs, as we ought to do, till they have first satisfied us, that theirs is the only true Infallible Church, upon whose authority we must believe the Scriptures, and every thing else.* He says, it is very freakish, to say no worse — Especially when I grant (to my cost) that we come to the knowledge of the Scripture by the uninterrupted tradition of credible witnesses, though I will not say, tradition of the Church. But if he understand no difference between the authority of an Infallible Judge, and of a Witness, he is not fit to be disputed with.

As for what I said, *That I would gladly hear what Notes they would give a Pagan to find out the true Infallible Church by;* he honestly confesses, *There can be no place for such Notes, when the authority of the Scripture is denied.* Which is a plain confession, how vain these Notes are, till men believe the Scrip-

concerning the Notes of the Church.

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Scriptures; and when they believe the Scriptures, they may find more essential Notes of a Church than these, viz. that true Evangelical Faith and Worship, which makes a Church; but these Notes the Cardinal rejects, because we cannot know the true Faith, and the Scriptures, without the Church; and the Justifier of *Bellarmin* says, that there can be no place for the Notes of the Church, when the Authority of the Scripture is denied: and therefore they must first agree this matter, before I can say any thing more to them.

But yet he says, *If the Church should say to a Pagan, We have some Books Sacred with us, which we reckon are Oracles of God, transmitted to us from generation to generation, for almost seventeen hundred years, which we and our forefathers have been versed in by daily Explications, Homilies, Sermons. However you accord not with the Contents of the Book, yet we justly take our selves to be the best Judges and Expounders of those Oracles. The Pagan would say, the Church spoke reason,* Pag. 44. But nothing to the purpose. For the question is, What Notes of a Church you will give to a Pagan, to convince him, which is the true Church, before he believes the Scripture; and here you suppose a Pagan would grant, that you were the best Interpreters of Books that you accounted Divine, and had been versed in near seventeen hundred years. But would this make a Pagan believe the Scripture? Or take your words for such Notes of a Church, as you pretended to produce out of

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Scripture? especially if he knew that there were other Christians, who pretended to the Scriptures and the interpretation of them, as well as your selves; and the only way you had to defend your selves against them, was without the authority of Scripture, to make your selves Judges both of the Scriptures and the Interpretation of them.

But he knows none that are so senseless to resolve all their Faith into the authority of the Church. I perceive he does not know Cardinal Bellarmin, whom he undertakes to justify, as any one would guess by his way of justifying him: let but the Romanists quit this Plea, that our Faith must be resolved into the Authority of the Church, and I shall not despair to see our other Disputes fairly ended.

For the Conclusion of the whole, I observed, That it is a most senseless thing to resolve all our Faith into the authority of the Church. — Whereas it is demonstrable, that we must know, and believe most of the Articles of the Christian Faith, before we can know, whether there be any Church or not. The order observed in the Apostles Creed is a plain evidence of this: for all those Articles which are before the Holy Catholick Church, must in order of nature be known before it.

This he grants, that in order of Nature all these Articles of the Creed concerning Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, must be known, before we can know a Church, but to us the Church is most known: Which

Which is plain and down-right non-sense ; if by *most known*, he means *first known*, which is the present dispute ; for whatever by the order of nature must be known first, must be first known without any distinction. For we speak now not of the Methods of Learning, but of resolving our Faith into its first Principles, and that surely must follow the order of nature. If the belief of the Churches Authority be not in order of nature before the belief of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it is a senseless thing to resolve our Faith into that, which though we should grant were the first cause of knowing these, yet is not the first principle in order of nature, into which Faith must be resolved. Children indeed, as he observes, must receive their Creed upon the Authority of their Parents, or of the Church, which is more known to them, than their Creed ; as all other Scholars must receive the first Principles of any Art or Science upon the authority of their Masters. But will you say, that the *Latin* Tongue is resolved into the authority of the School-master, because his Scholars in learning the *Latin* Tongue rely on his authority ? which yet is just as good sense as to say, that our Faith must be resolved into the authority of the Church, because the Church teaches Catechumens their Catechism, and they receive it upon the authority of their Parents, or Priests. And hence indeed he may conclude, that a young Catechumen knows his Teachers before he knows his Creed ; but to conclude that he knows a Church first, as that signifies a blessed Society, where Salvation is to be had, is a little

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too much ; for that supposes that he knows the Church before he has learnt *Unam Sanctam Ecclesiam*, that is, before he has found the Church in the Creed ; which is great forwardness indeed.

If he does not speak of Children , but of Men-Catechumens , for such there were in the Primitive Church , and such he seems to speak of , when he says , *It is plain , that the Catechumen knew there was a Church , a blessed Society , where Salvation was to be had , before he would enter himself to be Catechised in the Faith.* I do not doubt, but such men did know the Church , before they submitted to the instructions of it ; but they knew Christ too, and believed in him , before they knew the Church. For they first believed in Christ , and then joyned themselves to that Society , which professed the Christian Faith, that they might be the better instructed in the Doctrines of Christianity ; that they might learn from the Church , what the Christian Faith is, and the reasons of it ; not that they would wholly resolve their Faith into Church-authority.

But I find by our Author , that the Creed was made only for Catechumens : For he says, *The first person used at the beginning of the Creed, I believe, signifies I, who desire to be made a member of the Church , by the Holy Sacrament of Initiation , do believe what hath been proposed to me first, and then comprehended in that Fundamental Breviate.*

What he designs by this, I cannot guess ; for till the Catechumen professes to believe in Father,

ther, Son, and Holy Ghost, before he believes the Holy Catholick Church. But pray, what does *I* signifie, when a Bishop, or Priest, or the Pope himself repeats the Creed?

If, as he concludes, *We must believe Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, before we can compleatly determine the Church, and its definition*; he should have said, before we can know whether there be a Church or not, much less believe upon its authority, then indeed, as he says, *the Creed must begin with I believe in God*. But if our Faith must be resolved into the authority of the Church, as the Church of *Rome* teaches; and as these laborious endeavours of finding out a Church by extra-essential Notes supposes; then the Creed, as I said, ought to begin with, *I believe in the Holy Catholick Church, and upon the authority of this Church, I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost*.

Thus I have with invincible patience particularly answered one of the most senseless Pamphlets that ever I read; and I hope it will not be wholly useles; for sometimes it is as necessary to expose non-sense as to answer the most plausible Arguments; though notwithstanding the mirth of it, I do not desire to be often so employed.

F I N I S